



**NEWS RELEASE
GEORGIA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

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Public Service Commission Issues Order In United Cities Pipe Replacement Program

The Commission today voted to four to one to approve a program filed by United Cities Gas Company to replace 184 miles of cast iron pipe in Columbus, Georgia over a 15-year period and 46 miles of bare steel pipe in Gainesville, Georgia over the next 20 years. The Commission approved a rider that will allow United Cities to recover the additional capital costs over the useful life of the pipelines. United Cities began this accelerated replacement in October of this year. The amount of the rider is estimated to be 9 cents a month and should be on customers' bills in February 2001. The rider will increase to 45 cents in 2002 and to 78 cents in 2003. The pipe replacement program will cost about \$42.22 million.

The Commission approved an exemption from the rider for senior citizens age 65 and older and for households with an annual income under \$10,000.

United Cities serves 60,000 customers in Columbus and 10,000 customers in Gainesville. Through this program, the Company will replace pipes in Columbus that were installed between 1938 and 1956 and will replace lines in Gainesville that were installed from 1952 to 1964.

United Cities filed its last rate case with the Commission in May 1996. The rates currently being paid by United Cities' customers have been in effect since January 1997.

United Cities is a wholly owned subsidiary of Atmos Energy Corporation of Dallas, Texas.

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